

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented): A method for producing graphite carbon powder, comprising filling a container made of carbon having electrical resistance and electrical conductivity with carbon powder which has been prepared from carbon material through crushing in advance, supplying electrical current directly to the container, and passing electrical current through the container to thereby heat the carbon powder for graphitization by means of ohmic-resistance heat generated from the container.

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2. (original): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to claim 1, wherein the container is employed in a plurality of numbers such that the containers are stacked one on another, electricity is applied from one end of the stacked containers to an opposite end, and ohmic resistance at contact faces of the stacked containers is utilized as a main source of ohmic-resistance heating.

3. (original): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to claim 1, wherein the container is divided into portions in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of the container, and the divided portions are assembled to constitute a single container.

4. (currently amended): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to any one of ~~claim~~ claims 1 through 3, wherein electricity is applied from a water-cooled graphite guide electrode which is pressed to the end of the container.

5. (previously presented): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to claim 4, wherein graphite material is inserted between the end of the container and the guide electrode to prevent heat loss at the end of the graphite container.

E 6. (original): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to claim 5, wherein the graphite containers, the graphite materials and the guide electrodes are covered with carbon powder and/or carbon fiber so that the heating part is insulated and prevented from oxidation.

7. (original): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to claim 5, wherein at least any one of the part of the graphite containers, the graphite materials or the guide electrodes is placed in an inert gas atmosphere.

8. (original): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the carbon powder is heated at a temperature of 2500°C to 3300°C.

9. (currently amended): A graphite powder which is prepared according to the method as described in claim 8, wherein an interlayer distance (C_0) in a C-axis direction in crystal is 6.730 Å or less, and the graphite powder contains Fe in an amount of 100 ppm or less.

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10. (currently amended): A graphite powder which is prepared according to the method as described in claim 8, wherein an interlayer distance (C_0) in a C-axis direction in crystal is 6.725 \AA or less, and the graphite powder contains Fe in an amount of 100 ppm or less.

11. (canceled).

12. (canceled).

13. (canceled).

14. (previously presented): An electrode material for a lithium-ion secondary battery which makes use of the graphite carbon powder as described in claim 9.

15. (previously presented): A method for producing graphite carbon powder according to claim 1, wherein the container has guide electrodes disposed on opposite ends thereof and in electrical contact with the container, and said step of supplying electrical current directly to the container comprises applying a power source across said guide electrodes.
